

PAKISTAN

DEMOCRACY

INDEPENDENCE

1944



MANIFESTO

OF THE

PUNJAB PROVINCIAL MUSLIM
LEAGUE

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PRICE AS. 4

Punjab Provincial Muslim League Manifesto

GENERAL

In accordance with the Lahore Resolution of the All-India Muslim League the final aim and object of the Muslim League is Pakistan, which means the establishment of free Muslim States in a free and fully independent India. We believe that while true independence inevitably involves the liquidation of imperialism in all its shapes and forms, it must also provide the fullest opportunities of free development to all the nations that inhabit India, of whom the Hindus and Muslims are the most populous and we resolutely reject any "freedom" which may serve as a cloak for the permanent domination of one nation over the other. However, there has never been, nor can there ever be, any ambiguity in the declared policy of the All-India Muslim League that, whilst tolerating no abridgement of our birthright of full independence and sovereignty, we are pledged to fight with all our determination and vigour for the unsullied freedom of all the 400 million inhabitants of India, ourselves, our neighbours and our brothers.

The Muslim League seeks to forge the unbreakable unity of the Muslims of India behind this supreme and sacred aim of self-emancipation. Never before has the reiterated lesson of our past history been emphasised with deeper meaning than during the fateful course of the last few months; that the Muslims must rely on none except themselves and

must fear nothing so much as discords within their own ranks. We appeal to all Muslims who have the freedom of their people at heart to close their ranks and, rallying solidly behind our national organisation, —the Muslim League—to stand united as one organised nation with one clear, resolute and unambiguous goal.

As an integral part of our programme for freedom and in extension of the very principles on which we seek self-determination for ourselves, we pledge ourselves to safeguard the interests and fulfil all the legitimate claims and aspirations of those nationalities which reside as minority groups in our midst. We aim to see them develop and flourish in accordance with their own distinctive and valued cultural traditions in plenteous possession of all the economic and political liberties we seek for ourselves. As the Qaid-e-Azam has said, "The (Pakistan) Government will have the sanction of the mass of the population of Pakistan and the Government will function with the will and the sanction of the entire body of the people of Pakistan irrespective of caste, creed or colour"—(5th October 1944.)

The Punjab Provincial Muslim League is emphatically of the opinion that without the final overthrow of slavery there can be no real or permanent solution of our problems. We cannot raise our people from poverty, degradation and darkness into a new world of plenty, dignity and enlightenment without the liberation of our land. But whilst this fight is in progress, and in no diminution of it, it is the policy of the All-India Muslim League to take full advantage of the opportunities afforded by the existing legislative bodies both to wrest small ameliorations and to train our people for the future that must await them.

Until recently, due to a variety of reasons with

which the public is now sufficiently acquainted, the position of the Muslim League representatives in the Punjab Assembly was very dubious and the fraud practiced by the Unionists on the Muslims of the Punjab had shackled the growth of real democratic institutions in the province. Now for the first time a genuine Muslim League Party will be formed in the Punjab Legislative Assembly which shall be a true agent of the Muslim masses. The Working Committee of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League puts forward the following immediate programme which shall be strictly implemented by our organisation both inside and outside the legislature and which is intended to explain to the people what the Punjab Muslim League Assembly Party, whether in office or in opposition, stands and fights for.

The reign of deceit and deception fostered by the Unionists must now end. The people must feel assured that their interests shall now receive the powerful championship of the All-India Muslim League which shall be ever vigilant and watchful to see that the interests of the people are truly represented both by their deputies in the Assembly and on the public platform. In particular we desire the constituents to feel that they exercise a continuing control over the members they have elected, which does not cease with the casting of the voting slips into the ballot box. The Muslim League members of the Punjab Assembly are proud that they are not a self-appointed caucus responsible only to themselves and motivated by fear or favour of the bureaucracy, who can arrogantly brush aside all popular checks, all democratic controls and all manifestations of the Public voice as 'outside interference'. Our deputies are subordinate to the Muslim masses and to them alone. Consequently this Manifesto which they shall implement is issued not by a group of M. L. As. but under the authority of

the executive body of a people's party, namely, the Working Committee of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League. Upon the basis of the immediate programme outlined below the Muslim League seeks co-operation and assistance from all men of good will throughout the province, and specifically the Muslim League Party in the Punjab Assembly seeks coalition from all progressive elements in the legislature so that by their united efforts they may obliterate for ever the foul brand of Unionism which has for so long seared and scared the fair face of the Punjab.

I. MUSLIMS

The Muslim League, being the national organisation of the Muslims, owes its first duty to the Muslim people of this Province and will always strive to guard and promote the religious, spiritual and cultural traditions and rights of the Muslims. Without interfering with the just and proper interests of any community, we are pledged that the relative backwardness and poverty of our own nation shall form the foremost concern of all our efforts.

We are determined faithfully and eagerly to carry out all the instructions and decisions of the Planning Committee set up by the All-India Muslim League, and also to implement a new scheme for the institution of a Bait-ul-mal which is at present under the consideration of the All-India Muslim League.

II. CIVIL LIBERTIES

We advocate the precept that social amelioration is the main function of Government and that public activity is the only vital democratic basis of efficient administration, which is impossible without the fullest civil liberty. The Muslim League is pledged to the general principle that for the proper functioning of democratic Government, to check and expose the

excesses of power, to be a guide and a test of the relevancy of the administration to the needs of the people, the critical co-operation and fruitful activity of the public is a prime requisite. The Muslim League shall therefore jealously see that the administration makes every effort not to curtail, but to extend, champion and guard civil liberties,—the liberty of the person, of speech, of conscience, of the press and of association.

Under the present Unionist administration every journalist is regarded as a potential criminal who must purchase his freedom and mortgage his conscience before he is allowed to function. We stand to restore the liberty of the Press in all its plenitude and to remove all obstacles in the way of popular self-expression and the intellectual growth of the people.

The Muslim League representatives, whether inside the legislature, in the cabinet or on the public platform shall jealously fight for preserving the existing constitutional rights of the people and the principles of natural justice, flagrantly violated by the present Government. In this context we must make special mention of the injudicial, primitive and savage system of tyranny permitted by the Frontier Crimes Regulation (and its offspring the Jirga system), which has cast the shadow of dread over some of our western districts. We are pledged to abolish this vicious relic of the past and to re-admit these districts within the pale of civilised law.

During the present war emergency the Muslim League will strenuously fight to see that the slogan of "Defence of the Country" is not fraudulently used against persons who are no menace to public safety but who are simply disliked by the party in power. Consequently we stand for the drastic curtailment of the number of political prisoners and for no detention

without trial. We stand for the amendment of emergency legislation in order to safeguard the rights of the innocent. We also demand the humane treatment of political prisoners in jails. Similarly all emergency restrictions upon the freedom of speech, the press, organisation, movement etc., must be strictly confined in operation to prevent hinderance to the war effort.

The Muslim League notes with regret the vindictive policy of the Unionist Ministry in shamelessly victimising and harassing their political opponents through the reckless employment of all the engines of coercion placed at their disposal by an acquiescent bureaucracy. It considers this short-sighted policy to be a perversion of all the principles of justice and a dreadful confession of political bankruptcy. The Working Committee of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League pauses to give warning that this dangerous weapon shall in no distant future rebound with redoubled effect upon the head of its irresponsible progenitors by depriving them of the last vestige of respect in the eyes of civilised mankind.

III. REFORM OF THE ADMINISTRATION.

We feel that the corrupting influence of the Unionist Government has nowhere been more destructive of the public good than in the systematic debasement of the administration. The Ministry's irresponsible attitude towards its social and civic responsibilities has diverted the services from a proper realisation of their true object and position and has reduced them to petty agents for the disbursement of patronage and the extortion of party funds. The high-sounding schemes of public amelioration, never seriously intended to be implemented, have degenerated into so many occasions for bureaucratic oppression and Ministerial patronage because the Government has never been minded to impart vitality or earnestness to the

administration. It shall therefore be the constant care of the Muslim League Assembly Party, both in opposition and in office, to demand and achieve a drastic reform in the tone of the administration. We shall strive to lessen the gap between the administration and the people; to reform the administration into a genuine instrument of service to the people from an instrument for keeping a particular clique in power; to end the shameless subordination of the beneficent and nation-building services to coercive and repressive functions; to arouse and fortify public co-operation against bribery, corruption and nepotism, to promote efficiency and retrench wasteful expenditure and finally to encourage a progressive debureaucratisation of the functions of government.

We resolutely stand out against the unbearable oppression of the petty agents of bureaucracy which has robbed our rural life of all its peace, security and happiness. We are determined ruthlessly to exorcise this spectre which darkly looms over the face of our countryside. Further we are pledged to restore self-respect and dignity to the village people, particularly to the village headmen who have been reduced to helpless vehicles of corruption and oppression. We wish to restore to them their honourable and popular position of men risen from the people to serve the people.

We note that the gradation of the salaries of public servants is grossly disproportionate so that those who work most and fulfil the most responsible functions are paid least whilst those who work least and fulfil the least responsible functions are paid most. We stand to redress this unnatural balance, and particularly to raise the inadequate salaries of the lowest ranks of the police, the patwaris, the teachers, etc, so as to enable them to discharge their important social

functions with independence and integrity. We regret that the standard of life of the higher officials has been permitted to rise and place them on a pedestal as a privileged class, which is unmoved by the misery of the people whom they are employed to serve. Government functionaries, as servants of the people, shall be strictly bound to give courteous and considerate treatment to the people, especially to the poor and helpless.

Subject to the principles of advancement of the backward communities and the communal proportion, all recruitment and promotion in the services must be by merit and not by favour.

With particular reference to the unparalleled activities of the present Punjab Government, we stand to ban Government functionaries from taking forced contributions from the public even for a public or quasi-public fund.

We note that the present bewildering multiplicity of petty Government officials and functionaries in the local units has led to a complete lack of co-ordination and efficiency in the administration at the very point where it most closely touches the people. Besides creating difficulties of supervision this has multiplied the occasions for nepotism and oppression. We feel that at the lowest scale the specialised technical knowledge required of public functionaries is limited and that many subordinate functions which are now parcelled out can be usefully combined in one man. Such combination would lead to better co-ordination, more certainty and less oppression besides reducing the area covered by a single official. This must of course involve the extension of elementary training facilities to enable subordinate officials to learn the technique of the various functions they shall have to combine.

IV. Superfluous Patronage and Debasement of Public Morality.

The Muslim League shall resolutely stand out against all superfluous patronage and against all corruption and nepotism. We believe that it has been a considered policy of the Government to hinder the growth of a genuine sense of civic responsibility by the creation of purposeless sinecures and superfluous offices. Besides being the cause of the darkest oppression, they have embittered our rural life by creating unnecessary and unhealthy rivalry and they have irrevocably tied a vital strata of our society to the bureaucratic wheel. We demand a reversal of this policy and we shall strive to divest the Government of these means to debase the people and to lower their civic morality. Consequently we stand for a radical purification, or failing that for the complete abolition of such offices which are no more than the prizes offered by the bureaucracy to its faithfuls.

The Muslim League views with the strongest apprehension and the deepest contempt the mischievous activities of some of the leaders of the Unionist party who are today employing their public positions to propagate a doctrine of hatred between agriculturists and non-agriculturists, Jats and non-Jats, and between the exploited of the town and of the country. We consider this to be destructive of all harmony and civic sense and in direct contradiction of the time-vindicated message of Islam. We regard racial distinctions to be a relic of the past which can have no place in a progressive society. Moreover we are pledged to win an honourable and prosperous place in society for both the rural and the urban workers and we are convinced that our future lies in the integration and not in the antagonism of all classes of our people. The Muslim League therefore, will propagate a doc-

trine of harmony between Muslims and non-Muslims, Jats and non-Jats, Urbanites and non-Urbanites, Agriculturists and non-Agriculturists, to stand united for brotherly cooperation and mutual advancement.

V. EDUCATION

The Muslim League attaches prime importance to the full development of the culture and education of the people by all possible means, not only as an end in itself, but also to arm the people more effectively in our fight for national emancipation. We believe that mass education is the basis of all progress and a solution of most of our ills. In their own interest our masters have always fought shy of it and have created all conceivable obstacles in its way. The Muslim League, however, will firmly fight for free compulsory primary education for all and demand its accomplishment within the shortest possible time.

In addition it will demand the maximum facilities for adult literacy and post literacy reading. To that end it regards the development of central, district and village libraries and the organisation of travelling exhibitions, libraries and educative films as a prime care of the State.

The Government must also take steps to provide cheap textbooks, writing material etc., for the use of students. Above all, text-books must be expurgated of anti-national, demoralising and slavish matter. They must be re-written to give our children a pride in their own nationality and history, a confidence in their future and a love of mankind in general.

We demand that all statistics of Government and State reports and documents should be made available to the public, unless it is detrimental to public safety. An educated public must know and follow the basis on which its Government acts.

The Muslim League advocates a radical change in the existing system of higher education with its exclusive insistence on academic degrees and is dismayed at the present position when every educated youth is a beggar at the door of the bureaucrat. It suggests a very considerable extension in functional and technical education co-ordinated with a programme of future industrialisation, without which we cannot hope to keep pace with the other civilized nations of the world.

The Muslim League shall champion the right of non-Muslim minorities to education in accordance with their religion, culture and traditions.

Above all the Muslim League deplors that the spirit of brotherhood and selfless service inculcated by the Holy Quran have been sacrificed at the altar of the present system of education, which has destroyed our national morality and established an ethical system based on worldly greed, selfishness and cowardice.

We reject a slavish imitation of the West which is the ideal of our present day education and demand that the Muslims must be trained in the spirit of Islamic brotherhood and in the traditions of their religion so as to re-create a moral basis for their conduct. To this end we wish to make Quranic religious education a compulsory subject for all Muslims in the primary and secondary school standards and a study of Islamic history and culture a compulsory subject for all Muslims in secondary and higher education. We demand that a Chair of Islamic History and Culture be created in the Punjab University at once.

The Provincial Muslim League notes with the deepest concern the apathy of the present Government, which has resulted in a callous disregard of

the rights of the majority nation in the sphere of men's and women's education. As an essential step towards redressing the balance, the Muslim League demands an amendment in the Punjab University Act, which would secure for the Muslims adequate representation in proportion to their population in the Text-Book Committee, the Senate and Syndicate of the Punjab University. We shall also secure for the Muslims their due share in the Educational Services and demand that the main consideration in giving grants in aid to educational institutions shall be the relative population strength of the community served.

The Muslim League lays particular stress on the advancement of girls' and women's education which has so far been pathetically neglected, and in this sphere would like special emphasis to be placed on religious instruction, particularly for Muslims. The moral regeneration of our people must start at the cradle with the spiritual influence of the mother.

VI. DEVELOPMENT OF BACKWARD AREAS AND COMMUNITIES

In all questions of legislation and administration special regard shall be paid to the development of the backward regions, e.g. Multan, Rawalpindi and Ambala Divisions, and the backward communities, e. g. the Auds, the Achhuts and the nomad tribes. The Muslim League regards such a bias as being the just reparation owed by developed regions and communities to the generations of those who are now backward and exploited. We believe that social advancement can proceed most rapidly on the basis of cultural and material equality of all areas and communities. Consequently special attempts must be made to develop these regions and communities through the development of beneficent and educational

services and by the acceleration of Industrial development in backward regions.

VII. INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Since prosperity and plenty in a modern State are impossible without industrial development, the Muslim League stands for a plan of Industrial Development balanced and co-ordinated with agricultural development on the one hand and cultural and educational progress on the other. We regard the present "extreme, exaggerated, disproportionate and wasteful dependence on agriculture as the sole occupation of 5/6 of the people not as an inherited characteristic of the old Indian society surviving into the modern period, but in its present scale as a modern phenomenon and a direct consequence of imperialist rule." We believe that the intolerable pressure on the land, which will be aggravated by the anticipated post-war fall in the prices of agricultural produce, can only be relieved by providing employment in industry for surplus rural population. We therefore regard a planned Industrial economy as the prime requisite of the day, which must be based on the principles:—

- (a) that the State will accept responsibility to afford employment to every person willing and able to work and.
- (b) that it will be for the purpose not of putting profits into the pockets of the few—sacred aim of the Unionists!—but to promote the general welfare of the people.

The Punjab Provincial Muslim League stands for an immediate State Industrial Plan which must involve:—

- (1) the nationalisation of key industries and banks beginning with the immediate nationalisation of all

public utility services, particularly all forms of transport,

(2) private industry must be guided by the State Plan for the purpose of;

- (a) developing the wealth of the country,
- (b) enriching the mass of the people and not the privileged few,
- (c) relating profits of entrepreneurs to the degree of their contribution to the national wealth;

(3) opposition to the policy of Imperial Preference which is an intolerable check on the growth of our indigenous industries;

(4) opposition to monopolies and vested interests detrimental to the general prosperity of the people;

(5) extensive spreading out of industrial development in backward regions, e.g. Multan, Rawalpindi and Ambala Divisions, so that industry may be able to absorb surplus rural labour on the spot and the wealth of the country may be divided evenly amongst all the regions;

(6) development of decentralised cottage industries and handicrafts. We advocate the encouragement of co-operative production and State marketing and the provision of power driven machinery to co-operative cottage industry on the basis of electrification;

(7) continuous and minute exploration of the natural resources of the land by a permanent geological survey;

(8) balancing agriculture with Industry on the basis of progressive employment of the surplus population of the land in industrial enterprises;

(9) raising the physical, cultural and technical level of the population by;

- (a) improvement in the standard of living of the worker;
- (b) general improvement in education and public health and
- (c) provision of technical night schools for the worker.

VIII. LABOUR

The present administration in the Punjab has been extremely step-motherly in its attitude to industrial labour. The provisions of existing legislation for the protection of labour are not effectively applied, factory inspection is inadequate, and even the rules which all-India legislation requires the Provincial Government to frame in order to give effect to the law are in default. The Muslim League stands for the most solicitous care of the working population as the real producers of the wealth of the country. Consequently the League puts forward the following programme:—

(1) to secure the strict enforcement of International conventions and agreements for the welfare of workers.

(2) To lower the working hours for factory workers and other labourers.

(3) to fix minimum wages with a dearness allowance in wartime upon a sliding scale correctly corresponding to the rise in prices.

(4) strict enforcement of factory legislation, the Payment of Wages Act, the Workmen's Compensation Act etc. and the improvement of Government machinery to this end.

(5) the improvement of housing and hygienic

conditions of labourers and the advancement of a programme of slum clearance; legislation for better medical and sanitary arrangements for workers in factories and for the provision of working class quarters.

(6) recognition of the principle of collective bargaining and the worker's right to protect themselves through the formation of trade unions, by holding meetings and demonstrations, and by the right to go on strike. Protection of workers against victimisation for legitimate trade union activities.

(7) legislation for unemployment and sickness insurance, maternity benefit and old age pension.

(8) The State must set up an efficient Labour Department to look after the welfare of the workers. The Muslim League firmly advocates the principle that the State must accept responsibility to afford employment for all able-bodied and willing citizens. Particularly is it sensitive to the plight of our educated Unemployed who are a devastating indictment of our present system. As a preliminary measure the Muslim League suggests the institution of an Unemployed Register beginning immediately with a Register of the unemployed with a Matriculation or post-Matriculation educational qualification.

IX. AGRICULTURE AND RURAL POPULATION

As a mass organization deriving its sanction from and owing its foremost duty to the common people of the Province, the Punjab Muslim League is deeply conscious of its over-riding obligations to the rural population of the Punjab. It is in the poverty and degradation of the peasantry that we see the most poignant failure of the present administration and a criminal betrayal of the grandiose promise which had to come to nought because it emanated from a party which had nothing in common with the people and

which flourished on their exploitation. We stand pledged to a State Plan for Agricultural Development based on the welfare of the smaller Zamindar, the peasant and the landless agriculturist who form the vast majority of the producers. It must aim at a progressive increase in the productivity of agriculture balanced with absorption of surplus labour in industry. Above all it must secure a radical rise in the standard of living and its ameliorative measures must be based on realism and a recognition of the present mediaeval backwardness and poverty of our country-side where sometimes even wholesome drinking water is an unattainable boon. We would smile, if it were not too pathetic for humour, at the ridiculous efforts of the Unionist administration which has sometimes laboured to provide mosquito-nets for peasants who had not known the luxury of cots.

(a) *Protection from Debt.* The Punjab Muslim League is of opinion that reduction of Agricultural debts, although beneficial as a palliative and as a measure of temporary relief, can only be useful if it prepares the ground for a revolutionary improvement in the living conditions of the rural masses but it does not in itself afford any permanent security or positive amelioration to our rural life. Debt is clearly a symptom and not the root cause of poverty. Even if past debts are wiped out, an unbalanced economy which has established no proportion between the miserable income and anything approaching an acceptable standard of life for our peasantry would again compel the poor agriculturist to borrow in order to carry on his productive functions and to eke out a pathetic living for himself. This is a tendency that would already have asserted itself but for the artificial boom in agricultural prices engineered by war conditions and thus we may say

that in more ways than one the Unionist Ministry survives because of the prolongation of the international conflict.

The Punjab Muslim League stands for a progressive wiping out of past agricultural debts but it also stands for an elimination of the very causes of indebtedness. In this behalf it attaches particular importance to the provision of cheap and flexible credit facilities by the State without which removal of indebtedness is a mockery and a farce. We note that the existing co-operative Societies—pathetic memorials of an inefficient administration—have become notorious and ill-famed as agencies of oppression and ruin for the small farmer. We must see that the State sets up an Agricultural Credit Bank with branches in all rural areas for the provision of cheap credit to the poor farmers with the minimum of formalities and without conditions which defeat the purpose of the whole scheme—In this as in all matters we stand for a vitalisation of the services so that they can become instruments of service to the people and not occasions of bureaucratic oppression.

(b) Protection from Middlemen.

The dependence of the Agriculturist upon the middleman and the unregulated market which may reach alarming proportions in the apprehended post-war agricultural crisis, is one of the causes of poverty and must be eliminated by co-operative and State marketing of agricultural produce. We demand that security be afforded to the peasant against the tyranny of unpredictable price fluctuations and he be guaranteed a fair return for his social labour. We also suggest that the State should accept responsibility for ensuring the poor peasant against sudden loss, particularly, loss resulting from the death of

ploughing cattle, which is often the only means of production which he can claim as his own.

(c) Land Alienation Act. The Punjab Muslim League recognises the motive behind the Land Alienation Act as a legitimate attempt to protect an exploited class and notes that in the main it has operated beneficially. But we stand to extend and improve its real purpose which was to prevent the expropriation as a class of the poor cultivators. We feel that this end is not sufficiently secured by the protection against the non-Agriculturist usurer which must be extended to include alienations in favour of the large landholders and agriculturists money-lenders. We stand to establish by legislation the general principle that no person with a holding above a fixed maximum shall be competent to acquire more land and conversely that no person with a holding below a fixed minimum shall, without a justification considered sufficient by the State, be competent to sell.

(d) Humanising Conditions of Agricultural Labour. The Muslim League demands the humanising of the conditions of agricultural labour particularly in the big landed estates by legislation following the principles of legislation for the protection of factory and industrial labour in respect of:—

- (1) Provision for medical aid and maternity facilities.
- (2) Educational facilities for children.
- (3) Abolition of forced labour and forced contributions.
- (4) Effective legislation for security of tenure and fixation of fair rents.

(5) State supervision of conditions of labour in big estates.

(6) Provision of housing conditions which conform to the minimum requirements of a healthy and happy life.

(e) *Health.* The Muslim League stands for a revolutionary extension in the development of rural health services. It regards the health of the people as a national wealth most jealously to be guarded and demands that efficient medical aid must within a definite period be brought within the reach of the humblest citizen. Particularly are we solicitous for the health of our women as the mothers of our nation and we stand to develop maternity centres within easy access of every village. We note with consternation that in this century of material progress many of our rural brethren are deprived even of such an elementary prime necessity of life as wholesome drinking water. We demand that immediate steps be taken to provide wholesome drinking water to all villages.

(f) *Village Culture.* The Muslim League in its battle for culture and education gives prime place to the development of village culture and village happiness which has been progressively destroyed by the soulless bureaucratic rule and by the intolerable oppression of the petty agents of the bureaucracy. We regard the village as the basic unit of our community and must judge the progress and happiness of the nation by the progress and happiness of the village. We realise that genuine conditions of happiness must lack in the village until the standard of life reaches a level that can admit of leisure and culture and until the rule of the bureaucracy and its Unionist agents is substituted by a rule of the people. But in the meantime and

as a preparation for that we stand for the extension of all forms of village amenities and healthy social amusements which amongst other things will attract back to the village the intelligentsia who are now driven away by the intolerable conditions of life. We suggest the revival of traditional folk recitations, symposiums and games side by side with the development of adult education centres and libraries. We also suggest that Government pensioners who in the evening of their life are anxious to serve the community should be voluntarily associated in the task of national reconstruction so that their education, technical knowledge and experience may be used in the service of the nation.

(g) *State Assistance to the Agriculturist.*

(1) *Irrigation.* Irrigation is the lifeblood as well as the pride of our land. We demand that its administration be improved to become a genuine and sympathetic instrument of public service. The irrigation administration must co-operate with the Health department to safeguard against the spread of Cholera and Malaria due to defective management of water. Moreover we stand for an extension of irrigation through the development not only of our riparian resources but also of other sources, e.g. natural streams, the erection of dams, springs, lift irrigation etc. We also demand that such a vital service which touches the people so closely and presents so many temptations for abuse and victimisation must totally be reserved in the hands of the State.

(2) *Land Reclamation.* We watch with apprehension the alarming wastage of rich cultivable soil through the degradations of water-logging, thur, Kalar, and soil erosion, which in many of our fairest districts is becoming a matter of life and death for

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the people. We are surprised at the grossly inadequate reclamation efforts of the present administration, which have kept no pace with the annual rate of wastage. We demand that this grave problem be given its due importance and immediate steps be taken to vitalise and improve the departments concerned.

(3) *Road Construction.* The present road system has been planned from the angle of military and police requirements and is totally inadequate to serve the needs of the people. Without improvement in village transport there can be no escape from poverty for the agriculturist. Upon the basis of planned co-ordination of road and rail facilities we stand for a rapid extension of road construction in the rural areas many of which have been unjustly reduced to economic backways because of the lack of adequate communications.

(4) *Common Granaries.* We also demand public and co-operative common granaries for the village on the pylon principle etc. which would be a great blessing to the poorest cultivator who cannot afford adequate storage facilities.

(5) *Agricultural Department.* True to its unpopular nature the Unionist Ministry has contemptuously disregarded the possibility of a really efficient agricultural department and has ignored the example of other great agricultural countries like U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. who regard it as the first department of the State. In the Punjab, one of the principle granaries of the world we demand a vitalisation of agricultural research so that its benefits can be made available to all. We demand that the State department should offer effective technical assistance to agriculturists, including

agricultural education, and arrange for the purchase by the peasants of agricultural implement, manure etc, at cheap rates.

(6) *Electrification.* We envisage a great future for our people through the development of our so far neglected hydroelectric resources and we would like to see every village included in an extensive scheme of electrification.

(h) *Co-operative Farms.* We consider that considerable improvement in technique and prosperity is likely to result from a system of co-operative and State farms and we suggest that the Administration should set up model experimental farms on Government lands. We feel that the ex-soldiers with their technical skill and their acquaintance with disciplined methods would provide an excellent basis for the experiment and this might also develop as a fruitful method for the post-war rehabilitation of our warriors. If the experiment proves a success, we would urge its voluntary extension.

(i) *Reform and codification of Land Law.* Our real property and Revenue law is a maze of technicalities and a breeding ground of disputes for ruinous litigation. We demand its reform and codification with a view to precision and certainty. We also stand for such revision in our Revenue law as would facilitate and encourage consolidation of holdings.

(j) *State land for poor peasants.* The Punjab Muslim League is opposed on principle to the present administration's extravagant policy of selling and leasing out Crown lands to the highest bidder. Crown lands, in our opinion, are a possession of the people that should rightly be employed to

remedy and not to aggravate social evils, to mitigate and not to accentuate the polarisation of wealth. We therefore demand that a large proportion of Cown lands be reserved for satisfying the land hunger of peasants and for relieving the intolerable pressure on land. Particularity would we suggest the distribution free of charge of cultivable State waste land to the poorest peasants and Kummis free of charge.

(k) *Burden of taxation.* The Muslim League adheres to the general principle that the burden of taxation must be progressively placed on those most able to bear it. In this respect we consider the present scheme of taxation illogical and without justification. The attached table (See Appendix I.) demonstrates the ridiculous incongruity existing between the position of the Revenue payer and the Income tax payer, and shows how the average cultivator pays at a much higher rate and the largest landlord at a much lower rate than the corresponding incometax payer. We stand to remove this injustice by adjusting taxation on a more rational basis which will undoubtedly approximate the position of agriculturist to that of the income-tax payer.

X. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Muslim League stands to reverse the policy of the present administration which in an anti-democratic manner has nullified local self-Government in this Province.

We stand for the extension of the powers of elected Municipalities and District Boards to enable the people to rule themselves to the largest possible extent. As a necessary corollary of this we demand that all District Boards and Municipalities shall have

non-official Chairmen. Similarly we demand that the nomination of members should be restricted to its real purpose viz. (a) giving representation to an unrepresented or under-represented community and (b) obtaining technical services of a qualified outsider. We stand to end the abuse of this principle by the Unionists.

We draw attention to the scandal of the continuance of undemocratic, dictatorial administration by the suppression of the Municipality in the Capital of our Province.

The present chaotic and insanitary growth of towns as typified in our Capital, is a monument to years of Unionist misrule in this Province. We stand for comprehensive town planning in all areas with a population exceeding 10,000 to ensure efficient sanitation, good roads and footpaths, adequate public parks and children's playgrounds and civic amenities such as libraries to all citizens.

Consistently with our demand for an all round extension of local Government, we suggest that local bodies should have and exercise the power to fix a local rate on a progressive scale to finance their programme of public service. Local and provincial finance should be adjusted to permit local bodies adequately to discharge their social functions.

The Muslim League will encourage and support schemes for the moral rehabilitation of our people. We shall energetically promote the safeguarding of the health of the towns by improving the health services, promoting cleanliness, improving drainage, and extending the water-carriage system.

XI. ELECTION AND PARLIAMENTARY PRACTICE

The Muslim League stands for universal adult franchise for all elected bodies. In pursuance of the Resolution passed by the Karachi Session of the All India Muslim League, it demands immediate General Elections to all elected bodies. The continued postponement of General Elections amounts to virtual disenfranchisement of the population and serves nobody except those who wish to remain in power against the will of the people.

The Muslim League further demands a reform of the Electoral laws in the interests of democracy. The present system is eminently calculated to encourage the unchecked exercise of all forms of undue influence which is a circumstance that might have its attraction for the Unionists but cannot be tolerated by a democratic party.

The present system constrains the illiterate voter to poll in the presence of the agents of the candidates. This is destructive of the exercise of independent judgement by the voter and is no improvement on the previous system where the slip was dropped in the presence of the polling Officer. Therefore we demand the introduction of the colour-box or the symbol system prevalent in other advanced provinces which would enable the illiterate voter to exercise his right of vote without the intervention of another person. Thereby the secrecy of the ballot would be strictly enforced.

Similarly the opportunities of the rich to purchase votes must be restricted so that the scandal of Rs. 2 lacs being spent on a single election may not be permitted to recur, by amending election rules to bring transport facilities by candidates and lavish entertainment under "corrupt practices."

We also demand that the maximum amount permitted as election expenses to a candidate should be reduced and the limit strictly enforced. To check corruption we demand special and prompt supervision machinery during the course of the elections and also an amendment in the rules of Election Petitions to expedite decisions. We urge the provision of polling stations within easy walking distance of every village.

The Unionist Party has perverted parliamentary practice to gag the representatives of the people in the Assembly. The Muslim League if in power, would scrupulously promote, and now vigorously demands, a strict adherence to the rules fixing days for the consideration of non-official bills and stands out resolutely against the practice of stifling non-official opinion through the operation of the Government majority.

We call upon the world to witness the farce of a legislature which meets for less than three weeks in the year.

The Muslim League Party condemns the lack of seriousness of the present administration which uses every organ of government as a vehicle of patronage and not of service. Thus lacs of rupees have been spent during the current Assembly term upon the Darling Committee, the Unemployment Committee, The Retrenchment Committee, the Abiana Committee (whose Report has not yet seen the light of day), and yet no appreciable public benefit has resulted from these Committees or their Reports.

XII. FINANCE

We are a little tired of the Unionist boast of a surplus Budget at the end of every year too often artificially created by a deliberate under-estimation

of income and a deliberate overestimation of expenditure. We know of nothing that could be a more heartless mockery of the plight of millions of our Punjabi brothers who live in misery and want because of the pathetic underdevelopment of our country. The Ministry knows not where to spend because it cares not how the people suffer. We members of the Muslim League stand for a bold and extensive development in all spheres and we would not hesitate to find means to finance our social-ameliorative programme by:—

(a) Bold retrenchment in wasteful services, e.g. the cumbersome machinery of political police and C.I.D.

(b) Placing the burden of taxation upon those well able to bear it who have so far been exempted from it.

(c) Creation of a National Debt for National Development.

XIII. WAR EMERGENCY

The Muslim League shall, by every means of service to the people, seek to lessen the misery and burden of the war emergency consistent with the exigencies of the situation.

(a) *Dearness allowance.* The Muslim League demands dearness allowance for all upon the basis of a sliding scale corresponding to the fluctuations in the cost of living index.

(b) *Hoarding and Profiteering.* The Muslim League shall energetically combat hoarding and profiteering in all forms. It stands for the association of public representative bodies with all control and checks of profiteering. It demands drastic exemplary punishment to hoarders and profiteers and

the confiscation of hoarded stocks as well as illicitly acquired wealth from profiteering. The Punjab Muslim League stands for the energetic implementing of an All-India Food and Commodities Control Policy in the interests of people.

XIV. POST-WAR ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT

The present increased employment and production due to Government Purchases for War purposes as well as direct employment by the Government in military and other establishments have created a level of prosperity which must not be allowed to crash into a crisis but must be used as a stepping-stone for post war development. We feel that this can be effected if:—

(a) Resources at present devoted to war purposes are efficiently and rapidly converted to peacetime production and socially useful service. This requires economic planning.

(b) The purchasing power which at present resides in the State is created in the hands of the consuming public. This requires a general raising of wages and the standard of life. Certain resources may be retained by the State itself to be converted to public service.

XV. RETURNING SOLDIERS

There is no matter with which the Punjab Muslim League is more deeply concerned than with the future of our demobilised soldiers. We are deeply sensible of the duties we owe to them on their triumphant return. In all sincerity and in all earnestness we pledge ourselves to fulfill those duties but we are impatient of those unimaginative and decayed administrators who regard them as "a problem." They are a new and vital resource

of the country. They are coming back armed with technical and mechanical skill, schooled to the ways of discipline and enriched with the experience of the intensest years of human history. It is our problem that their skill and experience shall not be wasted, that their great qualities shall be mobilised for national reconstruction, that this new resource shall be fruitfully employed to the benefit of the nation.

We have no hopes from the present incompetent Unionist Government. We must remember that it was the same people and their associates who came into power soon after the last war and their lack of seriousness and sincerity was nowhere better illustrated than in their treatment of the returning soldiery. The Unionists who have never had any popular impulse behind them have often boasted of representing the absent soldiery for the perfect reason that the absent soldiers were never present to give them the lie. Now the soldiers will come back. Let them take up the challenge.

The radical national reconstruction outlined in the pages above would give work and opportunities to the demobilised soldiers. National Industry, for example nationalised transport, would absorb the technicians and mechanics. State collective farms would afford a field suited to their newly acquired skill. Crown lands, instead of being exhausted by the rich, will be distributed to them to form flourishing colonies of worthy and patriotic citizens. Their standard of life, their education, their new outlook, can only be preserved if they are treated not as a separate problem or caste, but as part of a new impulse to advance and benefit the entire nation. We stand to ensure that every soldier who returns shall be afforded a home wor-

thy of him, an employment equal to his skill and a life that is happy and prosperous because the life around him is happy and prosperous. For this we require a well thought out and balanced plan which rises above the clamour of vested interests and of which we can see no signs from a party that is a slave of the bureaucrats and a corruptor of the people.

Unanimously adopted by the Working Committee of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, Lahore on 31st October 1944 and printed by the authority of the same.

Iftkhar Husain Khan M.L.A.
President.

Mumtaz Daultana M.L.A.
General Secretary.

APPENDIX I
COMPARATIVE FIGURES OF INCOME TAX
AND LAND REVENUE

Annual Income.	Total Tax and charges payable on Income.	Land Revenue cal- culated at 25% of Net Assets (*).
Rs.		
2,000.	NOTHING.	500—0—0.
2,001.	39—2—3.	500—4—0.
4,000.	195—5—0.	1,000—0—0.
6,000.	403—10—4.	1,500—0—0.
8,000.	664—1—0.	2,000—0—0.
10,000.	924—7—8.	2,500—0—0.
20,000.	3,424—7—8.	5,000—0—0.
25,000.	4,830—11—8.	6,250—0—0.
30,000.	6,861—15—8.	7,500—0—0.
40,000.	11,549—8—0.	10,000—0—0.
50,000.	16,862—0—0.	12,500—0—0.
75,000.	32,018—4—0.	18,750—0—0.
1,00,000.	47,643—4—0.	25,000—0—0.
1,50,000.	81,237—0—0.	37,500—0—0.
2,00,000.	1,17,173—15—0.	50,000—0—0.
3,50,000.	2,44,362—0—0.	87,500—0—0.
5,00,000.	3,60,924—8—0.	1,25,000—0—0.

(*) Vide "S48-B of the Punjab Land Revenue Act"

APPENDIX II
RESOLUTION No. 14. PAESSD AT THE LUCKNOW
SESSION OF THE ALL INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE
ON THE 15th, 16th, 17th & 18th OF OCTOBER
1937 UNDER THE PRESIDENCY OF QAID-
I-AZAM M. A. JINNAH.

This Session of the All India Muslim League directs the Working Committee of the All India Muslim League to take immediate steps to frame and put into effect an economic social and educational programme with a view:—

To fix working hours for factory workers and other labourers.

To fix minimum wages.

To improve housing and hygienic conditions of the labourers and make provision for slum clearance.

To reduce rural and urban debts and abolish usuary.

To grant a moratorium with regard to all debts whether decreed or otherwise till proper legislation has been enacted.

To secure legislation for exemption of houses from attachment or sale in execution of decrees.

To obtain security of tenure and fixation of fair rents and revenue.

To abolish forced labour.

To undertake rural uplift work.

To encourage cottage industries and small indigenous industries both in rural and urban areas.

To encourage use of Swdeshi articles specially hand woven cloth.

To establish an industrial board for development of industries and prevention of exploitation by middlemen.

To devise means for the relief of unemployment.

To advance compulsory primary education.

To recognise secondary, university education specially scientific and technical.

To establish rifle clubs and a military college.

To enforce prohibition.

To abolish and remove un-Islamic customs and usages from Muslim society.

To organise a volunteer corps for social service and

To devise measures for attainment of full independence and invite the co-operation of all political bodies working to that end.

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